

## Primate's Aide Back From Fruitful Iranian Mission

The bunting is not yet out at Lambeth Palace. That cannot be done until all the Anglicans now detained in Iran have been released and the Britons among them are safely back in this country.

But there is about the place a carefully muted air of almost incredulous delight — and has been ever since New Year's Eve, when the Archbishop of Canterbury's specially-despatched envoy to Iran returned with most of his mission accomplished.

Mr. Terry Waite, the Archbishop's adviser on Anglican Communion affairs, had established the location of the detained Anglicans; he had actually met them, and delivered the Christmas gifts and greetings which he was bearing for them; and he had for them an unexpected bonus, too — an assurance that they would all be released within a matter of weeks.

Mr. Waite had also cleared the ground for resolving the "misunderstandings" which have arisen between the Iranian authorities and the tiny Anglican Church.

While waiting for news about whether he would be allowed to see the detainees he made some phone calls to ascertain the state of the Anglican Church in Teheran. The members were still meeting for worship occasionally, it seemed.

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## EVASIVE REPLY

The Convenor of Christians for Freedom, Mr. F. Brown, today condemned as inadequate and unacceptable the Soviet authorities' defence of the treatment of leading Christians including Gleb Yakunin, Dimitri Dudko and Lev Regelson. The defence was offered by the Soviet authority, Metropolitan Yuvenali, in response to an unusual protest from the World Council of Churches which Mr. Brown said could certainly not be described as trenchant or ill-considered.

Metropolitan Yuvenali, Chairman of the Department of External Affairs of the Moscow Patriarchate, said that Soviet citizens receive ample information on the treatment of Christians through the Soviet media. Mr. Brown said that such a statement would exacerbate rather than allay the fears of concerned people. The biased reporting about dissidents who refuse to toe the Soviet line is well known.

The Soviet defence of the sentences imposed on Gleb Yakunin is simply evasive, Mr. Brown said. Yuvenali's response has already been analysed by the highly regarded and authoritative Keston College which said "Metropolitan

## N.E.A.C.

The National Evangelical Congress has issued a Prayer Guide for the use of Congress participants and supporters.

Prepared by the Rev. David Crawford, Rector of Malabar Church in Sydney, the guide is in six parts for use in private devotions, group prayer or inclusion in public worship.

Bishop Alfred Stanway, in a foreword, writes:

"The greatest danger a conference faces is that those who are in sympathy with its aims and objectives will leave the praying to others. Those I have asked about it have not yet begun to pray for NEAC.

The Prayer Guide commences with a section entitled "PRAYER AND THE CONGRESS". Here the themes of the Congress are highlighted —

- The Gospel and the Kingdom
- Life and Ministry in the Local Congregation
- Christ and the Spirit
- Marriage and Family in God's Purpose

Other headings in the Guide include:

Prayer and the Individual, Prayer and the Leader, Prayer and the Congregation, Prayer and the Community and Prayer and the World. Each section contains a number of vital references and suitable prayers.

Copies of David Crawford's NEAC Prayer Guide are available by contacting:

The Anglican Information Office,  
St. Andrew's House,  
Sydney Square, Sydney (02) 20642

OR  
NEAC Office,  
The Mission of St. James and St. John,  
St. James Close,  
8-12 Batman Street,  
WEST MELBOURNE 3003.

## Members of new doctrinal commission named

The Archbishop of Canterbury and the Secretary-General of the Anglican Consultative Council, the Right Rev. John Howe, have now appointed an "International Anglican Theological and Doctrinal Commission" of the whole Anglican Communion.

Provision for the Commission was made by the ACC when it met last year. Members will meet four times, once every two years, and it is envisaged that they will consult widely in their own areas of the world, conferring with each other between meetings by post.

The Most Rev. Keith Rayner, Archbishop of Adelaide, is the chairman of the new Commission, and the Rev. George Braund, ACC Associate Secretary, its secretary.

The Commission will meet for the first time from July 20 to August 1 next year to study "Church and Kingdom in Creation and Redemption," paying special attention to "the diverse and changing cultural contexts in which the gospel is proclaimed, received and lived."

Church Times London, Dec. 5, 1980.



The Right Reverend Neville Chynoweth and Mrs. Chynoweth.

## Bishop Favours Ordination of Women

The new bishop of Gippsland, the Right Reverend Neville Chynoweth, said that while he was not prepared to move unilaterally on the issue he personally felt there were no theological objections against the ordination of women.

Bishop Chynoweth was speaking a few hours prior to his Enthronement at St. Paul's Cathedral. He said that while he would encourage women who felt called to the ministry to undertake theological training this would not be conditional on ordination to the full ministry. Until that question was resolved he would endeavour to use theologically trained women within the life of the Church. He said that this would present no difficulty in Gippsland as the parishes here were accepting of the ministry of deaconesses.

The bishop commented that he did not regard the ordination of women as related to the women's rights movements. He said that he saw it rather as an evolutionary progression in the light of current knowledge.

In regard to his new role as Diocesan Bishop he said that initially he must learn as much as possible about Gippsland. He comes to the diocese with no set policy. In a reference to Bishop Graham Delbridge's untimely and tragic death, the new diocesan bishop said that he was aware of the circumstances in which he was elected. He said that he wanted to carry on the work which Bishop Delbridge had left and which had been so efficiently continued under the leadership of Archdeacon Geoffrey Ross — Diocesan Administrator.

The bishop said that he was conscious that there was a significant number of aborigine families in Gippsland. He felt that these people should be encouraged to develop their own liturgical life and their own style of worship within the Church.

## Social Welfare Conference

A national Anglican conference on social welfare will be held at Macquarie University, Sydney, from Monday 31st August, to Friday, 4th September, 1981.

The theme of the Conference is "Family Futures — problems and opportunities."

The Conference is being sponsored by the Anglican Home Mission Society of the Sydney Diocese as part of the Society's 125th year celebrations.

Further details can be obtained from Mr. Cec Shevels, 16 Brunswick Parade, Ashfield.



Canon Arthur James Alexander Fraser, celebrated his 100th birthday.

Greetings were received from around Australia and from around the world.

The special service to mark the occasion, was held in the Chapel at Mowll Village, and attracted wide media coverage. (Photo Ramon Williams)

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## The Australian



# CHURCH RECORD

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FEBRUARY 9, 1981

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## TOP WHITE COACH FOR MARELLA PROJECT ...



### On Other Pages

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TO UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER ..... P.7

BOOK REVIEWS ..... P.7

Top ranking tennis coach, Bill Bowrey, shows how it should be done! His pupils are aboriginal children from Sydney and distant country towns throughout New South Wales. The Aboriginal Tennis Clinic was part of the Marella Aboriginal Project and was held at the Western Suburbs Hardcourt Tennis Association Courts at Concord, Jan. 14. The aim was to give these children the opportunity to learn the basics of tennis, and also to select those who may show promise in this sport. Over 37 attended. Slazenger will equip such outstanding children with tennis gear, while the professional of the "Tennis Professionals Association" will give 12 months free coaching. All was organized by the Church of England Homes which has already provided two homes in the Marrickville area, and has launched an appeal for finance to purchase a third. Such homes provide residential care for children from broken homes.

Photo Ramon Williams

## ... BUT ONLY SELF HELP IN HEALTH DISASTER SUCCEEDS

### "Abolish racism in S.A."

#### DUTCH THEOLS.

Eight prominent theologians of the White Dutch Reformed Church (NGK) have issued a testimony in which they call upon their church to relinquish its racist attitude. They express deep concern for the apparent impotence of the church to fulfill its calling, especially the reconciliation among the ethnic groups, the racial issues and the unity of the church.

The testimony was placed in the November 7 issue of *Die Kerkbode* and was signed by W. D. Jonker, B. A. Muller, H. C. B. Combrink, Johan Heyns, A. B. du Toit, C. F. A. Borchardt, W. P. Esterhuyse, and H. W. Rossouw. There is an expectation that many Dutch Reformed Church leaders will sign the testimony and that it will become a kind of "Barmen Confession".

At a conference of executive committee of the four ethnically delineated Dutch Reformed Churches in September, it was decided to found an ad hoc committee to engage in a discussion of moot issues such as the apartheid policy, united testimony, unrest in South Africa, strengthening of the bonds among the four churches, closer relations among Protestant churches in South Africa, and the terrorism in South Africa.

"The findings of a report prepared by the National Trachoma and Eye Health Team for the Royal College of Ophthalmologists are so disturbing that no Australian should be able to sit by and witness the suffering of so many people" says Roger Dadd, the Executive Officer of Force Ten in Sydney recently.

The team reports identifying in the Australian Aboriginal community, "The highest leprosy attack rate in the world ... one of the highest infant mortality rates in the world (second to that of Dahomey and Togo) ... and the highest Trachoma-induced blindness rate in the world."

The report also states that the only real progress in Aboriginal health was taking place through services which were based in and controlled by the Aboriginal communities themselves. It was suggested that there was a need for those services to be expanded so that in all 105 Aboriginal and Islander Health Organisations should operate.

Force Ten members are supporting The National Aboriginal and Islander Health Organisation in the development of these health services.

There is a good deal of help being provided by the existing services to develop others. The Alice Springs service has already helped three of the remote services within 1000km of them, and now in turn one of these two-year old remote services is helping another remote semi-tribal community at Warburton W.A. to set up their own health service.



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# EDITORIAL

## What we pay for but do not pray for

Few Christians give themselves to daily prayer for the governments in our land in spite of biblical injunctions to pray for those who rule. In public worship there has been a decreasing tendency to pray for governments in spite of the provisions in many of the churches' liturgies. If it was not where would any churches pray publicly for them? Is it simply a case that we pay but no longer have to pray for the public sector of our country? Is it that paying alone makes it work?

One obvious reason for our failure to pray lies in the perverse pleasure Australians obtain from knocking authority. It is not a particularly Australian habit, for it is a characteristic of fallen man, but it is one that we have publicly promoted and has become popular. We will not pray for those we lampoon. Secondly there is a great degree of cynicism concerning political leaders and public servants. They are seen as being in it for as much as they can get out of it in the case of the former, or for as little as they can put into it in the case of the latter.

Thirdly our failure to pray reflects our blindspot concerning that character of God and the Lordship of His Son. We have lost the biblical vision of reality where God sits in heaven exercising His authority over all the world. As the 1662 Prayer Book used to remind us, "we are taught by thy Holy Word, that the hearts of Kings are in thy rule and governance, and that thou dost dispose and turn them as it seemeth best to thy godly wisdom". In our thinking and praying God's Lordship over His world seldom extends beyond our own horizon simply reflects the self-centred character of our age.

Australia is a country that has been singularly blessed by God, and we enjoy a standard of living that our neighbours covet. We have great resources and they will bring even greater prosperity to our land if used properly.

Our politicians no longer preside over an economic situation they once appeared to control. They with a large number of public servants are daily involved in decision making that has profound effects on the lives of every member of the community. We know that they are daily bombarded by interests groups who are seeking their own ends whether they benefit the community or not. The machinations of the political parties and their leaders' determination to survive in office by vote catching policies are an added factor that leaves the average person cynical and somewhat fearful for the future.

However if our view of God is that reflected in the Bible the knowledge of how governments work will in no way discourage us from praying. In the end God will have the final say in His world. What we need to pray earnestly is that God's blessing and not His judgement will fall on our land, and that He will in His mercy pour our undeserved blessings on us. We must call upon Him daily that He will restrain the selfishness of men and give wisdom and insight to our leaders to bring blessing and order to our land.

If we believe in prayer to the God revealed in the Bible then we will know that our individual daily prayer and corporate calling upon Him for our country will not be in vain.

## Can you take your family to see it?



### SUPERMAN II

Our hero is better than I ever remember him in the comic books. Clark Kent is the bumble footed reporter — played with restraint and tongue-in-cheek. Superman is everything you'd expect — almost omni-present and ready to save the American dream and anything else that moves or screams.

Superman II is the story of a failure — how Superman becomes distracted by Lois Lane, gives up his super powers and then has to work at getting them back again when three evil pieces from the planet Krypton arrive to terrorise the earth.

This is a saviour made in man's image or like the fallen angels in Genesis. If you can ignore the violence in the film (or pre-deal with it) this movie is an excellent vehicle to discuss with a youth group — over 14 years — the concept of what a Saviour is and should be.

In one of the crucial scenes Superman, stripped of all his power — facing annihilation — comes back to his North Pole hideout and standing before its ruined control console says to no one in particular "Father, I wish you could help me. I have failed".

An excellent contrast between a saviour in man's image and one in God's. (God's name, incidentally, is used quite often in the film — that could make good background discussion too on the concepts of God existing even when Superman is around).

Altogether, a bit of a jolly romp for adults — the effects are good fun and the script executed with great humour and panache. Definitely prepare teenagers and discuss the level of violence.

Superman II at the Village Cinema City, 545 George Street, Sydney.

G. HOLT

# MAINLY ABOUT PEOPLE

## SYDNEY

Rev. Dr. J. A. Friend, Diocese of Tasmania is now Deputy Master, New College and Deputy Registrar, Australian College of Theology.

Rev. J. Bales, North Sydney is now Curate, South Sydney.

Rev. N. Macken, Lane Cove is now Curate, Wentworthville.

Rev. R. E. Nixey, Eastwood is now Curate, Mosman.

Rev. N. A. Speyer, Wahroonga is now Curate, Dapto.

Rev. D. J. Reay, Darling Point is now Curate, Pymble.

Rev. D. Clayton, Pymble is now Curate, Lindfield.

Rev. R. McKinney, Pitt Town is to be Rector, Leichhardt.

## ADELAIDE

Rev. R. A. BUNDY will be licensed as Assistant Curate to the Rev. R. J. Piper, Rector of Holy Trinity Church, Adelaide from 1st February, 1981.

Rev. J. S. DUNKERLEY will resign as Assistant Chaplain of St. Mark's College on 6th February, 1981 and will receive a General Licence as from that date.

Rev. P. S. THOMSON has been appointed Minister-in-Charge of St. Luke's Church, Modbury from 20th February, 1981.

ORDINATION 8th FEBRUARY, 1981.

To the Priesthood:

Rev. K. P. BRICE, St. Margaret's, Woodville.

Rev. S. CLARK, St. Mary's, South Road.

Rev. B. H. DAVIS, St. Augustine's, Unley.

Rev. G. B. HEAD, St. Theodore's, Toorak Gardens.

Rev. R. A. MORONY, St. Columba's, Hawthorn. Admission to the Diaconate:

Mr. R. J. DEHLE, St. Andrew's, Walkerville.

Mr. R. J. RAY, St. Francis', Edwardstown.

Mr. W. G. C. WINSALL-HALL, St. Philip's, Broadview.

## CLERICAL APPOINTMENTS

Rev. R. J. GORRIE is to be issued with a General Licence from 15th December, 1980.

Rev. A. W. LINTON is to be licensed as Assistant Curate to the Ven. W. J. Chittleborough, Rector of the Parish of Magill from 1st January, 1981.

Rev. D. E. GREY-SMITH is to be admitted as Priest in Charge of St. Francis Church, Northfield on 18th December, 1980. (This is in addition to his Cure of Souls at Broadview.)

## Assistant Bishop Appointed

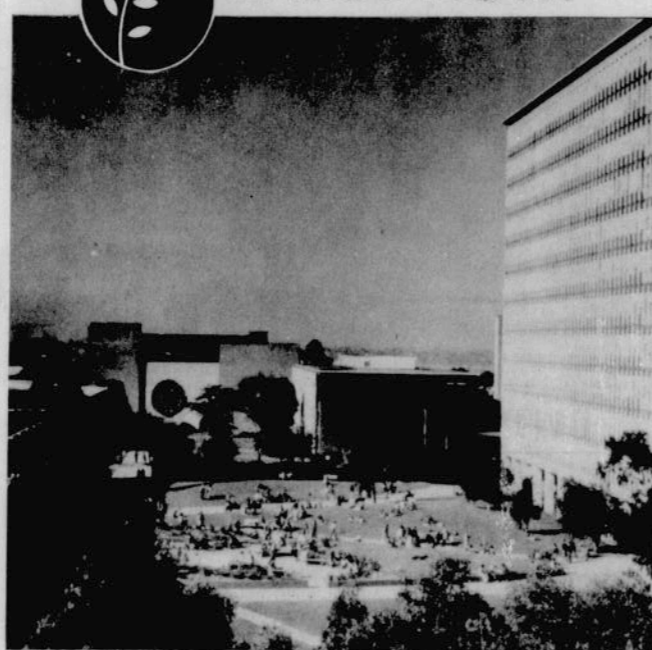
The Bishop of Canberra & Goulburn, the Right Rev. C. A. Warren, announces the appointment of Archdeacon Owen Douglas Dowling as Assistant Bishop of Canberra & Goulburn.

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## Clarifying homosexuality

In response to the request of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod Nimes 1980, the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands decided to issue the following clarification regarding its statement on homosexuality.

The different views and open questions within the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands regarding the significance and practical input for our time of the relevant Bible passages (on homosexuality) as well as the pressure and the suffering which the homosexual (homophile) neighbor experiences have led to a pastoral design of their decision.

The pastoral design is based on the fact that in the fellowship with the homosexual neighbor within the congregation also the giving of bodily expression to the mutual feelings for each other as an aspect of living with the homosexual disposition enters into the picture.

Also in regard to this aspect of one's way of living with one's homosexual disposition applies what Synod called to do, namely not to condemn but to respect one another's life's secret and to recognize one's own responsibility before the Lord.

## No solution

In his farewell sermon as secretary of the Dutch Reformed Church (NGK) in South Africa, Dr. Frans O'Brien Geldenhuys stated that he refused to accept the fact that in his country the inhabitants must kill each other off to solve their problems. Many people say that they are Christians but refuse to become reconciled to each other. Many whites refuse in their hearts to accept blacks as fellow Christians.

## On Deadlock Mixed Marriages

After ten years of discussion, the inter confessional dialogue on the theology of marriage and the problems of mixed marriages by the Roman Catholic Church, the Lutheran World Federation and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches is deadlocked. A mutual unanimous statement was issued during an evaluation in Rome.

Theologians from all three global organizations agreed that a breakthrough can be reached only after the churches of the Reformation and the Roman Catholic Church agree on the nature of the church and recognize each other without restrictions. The Catholic Church recognizes only those marriages which are blessed by a priest.

## Workers Murdered

A Missionary couple who worked in a hospital in Kabul, Afghanistan, were murdered in their home there on New Year's Eve, according to reports reaching the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland. Erik Barendsen, 44, and his wife Eeva, 41, were killed in their sleep by an unknown knife-wielding assailant. Their two children, asleep in another room were unharmed.

The Barendsens worked at the eye hospital in Kabul founded in 1973 by the International Assistance Mission. They lived in downtown Kabul in a house surrounded by a high wall. Despite the increasing hostility directed towards foreigners the couple had decided to remain in Afghanistan because they felt their work was badly needed.

## The size of the Mustard Seed



Mr. Geoff Thompson, an agronomist from Melbourne working in Pakistan to adapt varieties of wheat, lentils, chick peas, sunflowers and mustard for local use, returned to Australia for six weeks leave.

This church project, run by the Technical Services Association in Lahore, has been supported by the Australian Council of Churches through its Christmas Bowl Appeal for a number of years.

Geoff is looking forward to his next two years as the work has reached the stage where the improved varieties need to be used by the local farmers and the extension work will be a challenge.

## NATIONAL SCRIPTURE DISTRIBUTION CONSULTANT

The Bible Society in Australia invites applications for the position of National Scripture Distribution Consultant.

The appointee will be required to promote the effective distribution of the Scriptures by the churches and Christian groups throughout Australia. The position requires creativity and imagination and provides a great challenge. He or she will be required to live in Sydney.

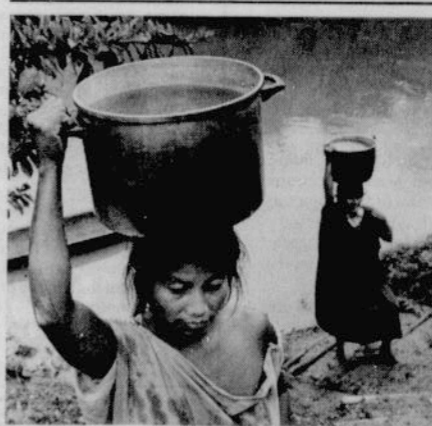
Further details, including job description, are available from the General Secretary, The Bible Society in Australia, P.O. Box 507, Canberra City, A.C.T. 2601.

Applications including full details of qualifications and experience, together with the names and addresses of three referees, should reach the above by March 2, 1981.

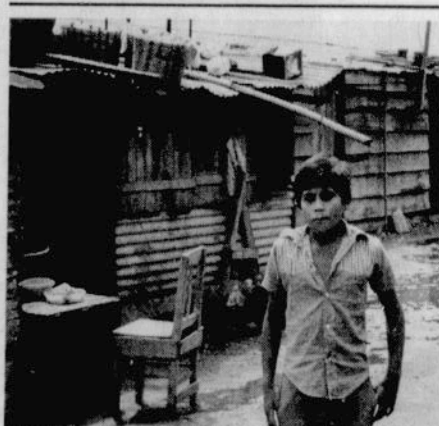
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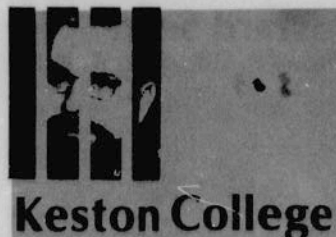
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## World Council of Churches is Concerned

In a letter to the Head of the Departmental of External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, the WCC indicates its "continuing preoccupation regarding the trials and sentencing of some Christian clergyman and believers in the Soviet Union".

The WCC has consistently refrained from entering into public debate about such cases in the Soviet Union despite urging from some member Churches, says the letter, "since we wish to preserve a sober and careful approach that respects the complexity and particular character of the context in which your church with its millions of believers, as well as other Christian communities in your country, make their witness." Nevertheless, the letter makes it clear that the WCC has been in correspondence and consultation with the Russian Orthodox Church over the present cases since 1979. One result of this consultation is that the WCC is now able to "assure other member Churches that the two church-related persons who appeared at the trial (of Fr Yakunin) did so as private citizens and at the direct order of the court", and were not representing the Russian Orthodox Church as such. This is a reference to the testimonies offered by Osipov, a professor of theology and monk Iosif Pustoutov.

The WCC finds that the sentence given to these Christians are in any case "disproportionate with the seriousness of the crimes which have allegedly been committed", and is particularly concerned at the news that Fr Yakunin may have to face a second trial.

Finally, the WCC regrets the unfortunate timing of these trials as they have taken place some weeks before the opening of the Madrid review of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. The WCC fears that the trials will do nothing to establish "an atmosphere conducive to detente".

Keston's Director the Reverend Michael Bourdeaux, sent a query to the WCC asking what action the WCC was preparing to take, and received the answer that no immediate action was contemplated. The College welcomes this new initiative undertaken by the WCC.

## "Get Bible preaching elsewhere" Schuller

On September 14, 1980 the Garden Grove Community Church in California, a member of the Reformed Church of America (RCA), dedicated its Crystal Cathedral of the steel and glass structure featuring more than 10,000 window panes and accommodates 2890 people in opera-style seats, the Dr. Robert Schuller, was able to announce that the total cost for the construction, 18 million dollars, had been received in cash gifts or pledges.

Recently Dr. Schuller, a graduate of Hope College and Western Seminary in Holland, Michigan, briefly returned to Western Michigan where he was well received by his colleagues in the RCA. Dr. Schuller has often been under fire in his denomination for his type of preaching. Schuller, who clearly favours his ties with the Reformed Church, openly admits: "I believe in the Bible, but if people want Bible preaching they can get it elsewhere." He has also been much criticized for erecting this lavish Crystal Cathedral.

At the dedication of the new church, Dr. Arie Brouwer, RCA General Secretary, brought greetings from the denomination and said in reference to Schuller's phenomenal success: "This ministry has marked a turning point in our denomination. The founding of the Garden Grove Church in 1955 marks the effective beginning of the Church Growth program in the Reformed Church in America."

R.E.S.

## Children's communion legalized

In 1978 the synod of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (GKN) decided that under certain circumstances children may participate in the celebration of the Lord's Supper. In the two years the decision has been in effect children's communion has become family communion.

This year's synod had to evaluate the 1978 decision. Many objections had come in. Many of the objectors felt that the 1978 synod had acted too hastily. This year's synod agreed that the 1978 decision was indeed in conflict with the Church Order. However, with the exception of one delegate, synod was also of the opinion that family communion could not be undone in churches that have introduced it. Synod decided to make a brief addition to the Church Order to the effect that under certain circumstances the rule of public profession of faith for admission to the Lord's Supper may be waived.

## BCC says 'yes' to radical report on sexuality

A Report on human sexuality by a working group appointed by the British Council of Churches is likely to cause considerable controversy.

Entitled *God's Yes to Sexuality* published jointly by Collins and the BCC it sets out "to explore to what understandings of human sexuality and sexual relationships Christians are committed by the faith that men and women are created in the image of God."

The report claims no authority "other than that of the wisdom the reader may recognise in its pages..." and begins by reviewing contemporary understandings of sex and gender.

On the 'proper approach' to the Bible and the Christian tradition, it concludes, "Our task is a continuation of that undertaken in the New Testament... but we cannot escape our own interpretative responsibility."

"Thus we may be led to say that we can speak equally of God as father and as mother, recognising the limitations of both words, for they both make use of deep human experience to point to the infinite love of God."

The section on 'Persons and Personhood' deals with the questions of "the right use of genital sexuality relationships". Sex, says the report, has to do with "sensitivity and commitment, and with mutual personal growth".

It then goes on to 'Patterns of Relationship', aiming "to identify and comment upon the part sexuality plays or might more creatively play... if some of the misunderstandings and fears which surround it could be removed or overcome."

At a press conference in London last week three points emerged: no evangelicals had been approached to become members of the working group; two members of the group were self-confessed homosexuals (they did not say who), and within the group itself there had been disagreement.

The Rev. Ruth Matthews (Baptist) and the Rev. Rupert Davies (Methodist), both members of the working party, stressed that the final report was neither definitive nor unanimous.

As for the evangelicals, the Very Rev. Basil Moss, provost of Birmingham Cathedral, said that the BCC had invited its member churches to appoint people to the group. "When we came together we discovered there were no evangelicals included. But no one on the working group was concerned, or felt the need for a member of that group to be there. So we went ahead."

The Archbishop of Canterbury had been invited to write a foreword for the report, but he refused (no reason given). The next approach could be to the chief moderator of the Church of Scotland, the Rev. Bill Johnson.

## Transmitter reaching China and Russia

A Russian believer in Siberia, in conversation with an FEBC broadcaster who visited the Soviet Union recently, spoke of the impact of the transmissions of the Far East Broadcasting Company's 250,000 watt medium wave station on Cheju Island, South Korea. "All strata of Russian society, including government officials, University professors and soldiers, tune in to these broadcasts, which at night time can be heard across the entire country. Great numbers of people have come to know the Lord through these broadcasts."

He said that while the shortwave broadcasts are often jammed, there is never any jamming on the medium wave band where FEBC is heard. It always comes in like a local station.

Reverend Kenneth Lo, FEBC's Hong Kong Director, reports that nearly half of the mail response from Mainland China is generated by the three hours of Mandarin programming broadcast only from the South Korea station.

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## No border hopping

Unlike Reformed Churches in other countries, as for example, the Christian Reformed Church in North America, each congregation of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands has its own precisely outlined district. Church rules stipulate that church members can belong only to the congregation in their own district. An attempt made in 1976 to allow members who are unhappy with their home congregation to transfer to a neighboring church was turned down by Synod. In the judgment of Synod, allowing this might have turned the church into a "club of likeminded people." This year's GKN Synod turned down a similar request for more liberty in joining another congregation. Synod felt that allowing such spiritual migration would be an obstacle to the common struggle for the one faith.

## Reformed Church in Africa Withdraws

(Durban, South Africa) At its synod the Reformed Church in Africa decided to withdraw from the Reformed Ecumenical Synod. The reasons given for this unexpected action were that the small church does not have the personnel and finance to belong to two international reformed organizations. The Reformed Church in Africa chose to remain in the larger and older World Alliance of Reformed Churches. Another reason for withdrawal was that in the synod's view the RES has constantly maintained a low profile and has not given clear guidance to its member churches on social and political issues. The synod also decided to seek union with the Dutch Reformed Mission Church which is an active member of the RES.

## Indonesian Church Against Charismatics

Reacting to the increasing influence of charismatic movements in various congregations, the 18th Synod of the Indonesian Christian Church of Central Java discussed the matter and took the following actions:

Church members are reminded of the fact that the Indonesian Christian Church of Central Java rejects the views and teachings of the so-called charismatic groups which are considered to be contradictory to the fundamental teaching of the Church, especially as regards their view on spiritual baptism — re-baptism through immersion, enforcement of spiritual gifts, abuse of spiritual voices, etc.

Church members are called upon to join the existing groups in the congregation for various activities according to their own interests and gifts. In so doing they should not join other groups without the knowledge and consent of the Church Session.

All members of the church are advised and summoned to a new conviction of and commitment to the fundamental teachings of the Church, based on the Holy Scriptures, in accordance with the Heidelberg Catechism.

Based on this action, several local congregations have taken initial steps towards revitalizing their faith through pastoral letter, house meetings, and regular discussions on the principles of faith.

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## Call for 100,000 missionaries

Speaking at the World Evangelization Crusade in Seoul, Korea, Chairman Joon Gon Kim issued a call for 100,000 missionaries from Korea to serve in other countries by 1984 — the year of the 100th anniversary of Protestant missionary efforts in Korea. This would mean 1,000 missionaries for each year of Protestant missionary effort in Korea. At the mass gathering, which was attended by well over a million people, 10,000 university students, along with 3,000 high school students, committed themselves to this goal. Kim called on the nation's parents to give up their sons and daughters for the work of fulfilling the Great Commission.

## Political preaching out

Speaking at a Ministers Conference, Dr. H. N. Ridderbos, professor emeritus of the Theological School in Kampen, declared that people do not need political preaching and are not interested in it. If the preacher only proclaims the Gospel and sticks to the text of the Bible, the people will listen.

The subject of Professor Ridderbos' address was the authority of the Bible. He rejected a marxistic approach to the Bible. In referring to the synodical decision regarding homophiles, he was of the opinion that the synod should have mentioned the Biblical givens on homosexuality.

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# TO UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER

## How much can you tell your partner?

Dr. Alan Craddock

The Bible describes the relationship between husband and wife as being "one flesh" (Gen. 2:24; Mark 10:8). This implies a unity between the two persons and suggests the need for a level of intimacy and mutual knowledge which can reach and maintain such closeness. If a married couple are to effectively know one another they must be prepared to indulge in self-disclosure.

Self-disclosure has been identified by marital researchers and counsellors as a key communication factor which enables the development of satisfying and stable marital relationships. It is a process which involves the expression, by one person to their partner. Self-disclosure involves highly personal and private information which would not normally be shared in the course of day-to-day interactions with friends and acquaintances.

There is a considerable body of theory and research which indicates that couples who self-disclose effectively and trustingly, and who react to such disclosures sensitively and appropriately, are experiencing strong and satisfying marital

relationships which are likely to endure over time. Self-disclosure gives the partner on the receiving end a better and clearer picture of their spouse, thereby enabling them to meet the needs of their spouse more effectively.

However, not all people are convinced that self-disclosure is either necessary or helpful. There is a popular view which suggests that it is actually dangerous to bare one's soul in this way and that one becomes more vulnerable to attack. Indeed, the information disclosed can become ammunition for such an attack. The problem being referred to here is lack of trust. The self-disclosure is not a mutual activity for the couple. One person trusts and shares, the other fails to do so and actually wants to hurt their partner. There certainly is a problem with such a marriage, but self-disclosure is not the cause. The failure of self-disclosure to be helpful is a symptom of far more basic problems in such a marriage. Self-disclosure is not providing the reasons for the attack, it is simply providing ammunition for an angry and resentful person who

for some other set of reasons wants to hurt their partner.

Another objection to self-disclosure is that it does not allow for the keeping of so called "necessary secrets" if there is too much disclosure. Too much self-disclosure, according to this view, creates hostility or even overloads the receiver with a burdensome responsibility. Once again the problem is not with self-disclosure as such. The problem emerges in a particular relationship, one which involves a possibly inappropriate disclosure which is simply not helpful to either party. The problem here is that the disclosure lost sight of the unavoidable effect that the information has upon their partner. The fault lies with insensitive and selfish disclosures rather than self-disclosure in itself.

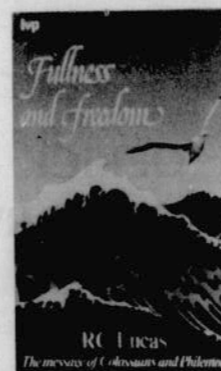
A recent study (Jorgenson and Gaudy in *Family Relations*, 1980, 29, 281-287) provides empirical support for the importance of self-disclosure in marriage. The authors conclude after their study of 120 married couples that "... it is evident that communicating to each other about relatively personal and intimate

matters constitutes an important step in the process of need and goal fulfilment in marriage... that communicating about fears, problems, self-doubts, feelings of anger or depression, and aspects of marriage perceived to be bothersome to one or both partners, as well as openly sharing positive feelings... are of central importance in fulfilling the 'therapeutic function' of marriage." (pp. 285-286).

The study found no evidence that very high levels of self-disclosure will always and inevitably lead to negative consequences. High levels of self-disclosure were acceptable and helpful provided that the disclosures were seen to be a mutual and private activity to be entered into in a sensitive and caring fashion.

The Biblical model of marriage clearly involves self-disclosure, but effective self-disclosure is not guided by selfish motivations but is relationship-centred. The needs of both persons must never be overlooked if self-disclosure is to be both an expression of and a means of attaining a "one-flesh" style of relationship.

## BOOK REVIEWS



## Fullness and Freedom: The Message of Colossians and Philemon

R. C. Lucas  
(I.V.P., 1980), 191 pages.

Dick Lucas wrote this trait-forward commentary with the conviction of one to whom Colossians has spoken with power. "In the course of my life," he said, "I have been influenced in various directions away from my evangelical foundations by Christian men of great spiritual devotion and zeal. By contrast, my commitment to New Testament faith has been immeasurably deepened by the study and teaching of this letter over the last four years..."

The following comments provide samples of Lucas' emphases. Christ is the supreme Lord and sufficient Saviour. There are three guiding principles for Christian living: As you received... so live; as you were rooted and grounded... be built up; as you were taught... be established in the truth. In avoiding a return to slavery there are three ways in which Paul raised the alarm: don't let anyone kidnap you; don't let anyone condemn you; don't let anyone disqualify you.

The section on family relationships offers a defence for a right understanding of "submission", the thorough-going implications of a man's love for his wife, and the damage which can be caused children when strong parents abuse their power.

The Letter to Philemon should have merited a fifth of Lucas' book. Its treatment in less than eight pages is disappointing, especially as some of Paul's main points may have been missed. The alternative understanding offered by John Knox is dismissed in two lines without any outline of his view. I am frustrated when told "there seems no solid ground for abandoning the traditional interpretation" if I am not told the alternative views with their strengths and weaknesses at least nominated if not discussed.

The meaning of Philemon 10 could indicate that Paul was asking "for Onesimus", that Philemon second him back to Rome to work with Paul; and all that without detracting from what is requested in verse 16.

This book is most stimulating, and of special relevance to students, clergy, and leaders of Bible study groups.

Lindsay Johnstone



## Christ and Violence by Ronald Sider Lion Publishing Company

Many Christians were excited about Ronald Sider's earlier book, viz., "Rich Christians in an age of hunger". But his latest book "Christ and Violence" really leaves a bad taste in one's mouth.

He takes an extreme pacifist viewpoint, and needs to read such classics as P. T.

Forsyth's "Christian Ethic of War", and "The Justification of God".

He either neglects or rejects the whole biblical teaching on the wrath of God, and also the teaching that war is a judgement scourge in God's hands.

Emil Brunner once said no one who denies the wrath of God can be a biblical theologian. Does this mean that Sider is not a biblical theologian?

Sider even implies that a soldier killing in wartime commits murder, p. 59.

He roundly states (p. 30), that "any rejection of the non-violent way in human relations involves a heretical doctrine of the atonement".

This view itself is a rejection of the warfare, battle, victory theme in the death of Christ.

Sider quotes with agreement from a man called James Douglas (p. 61), "revolution against the established order is the criterion of a living faith."

He quotes from Romans 5:8-10 (p. 85) but leaves out verse 9. Why? Is it because it contains a reference to the wrath of God?

He implies that calling for nuclear disarmament is an authentic note of a genuine Christian congregation (p. 88).

He talks about a non-violent struggle for justice (p. 89), whatever that means.

There is complete nonsense on p. 90 where he speaks about "Biblical Christians who even as they are carted off to jail will express Christlike tenderness to policemen".

On (p. 17) referring to the Lord's prayer, he says Christians "ask God to forgive their sins as they forgive everyone who has debts or loans owing to them". What nonsense!

Sider says on page 22 that we are bound to the words of Jesus, then what does he make of Matthew 22:7?

He calls our Lord's cleansing of the temple (p. 41) "a dramatic act of civil disobedience," which is re-interpretation with a vengeance.

On page 13 he says "Pilate, according to a contemporary, was 'of hard disposition, brutal and pitiless'." This is somewhat different to the picture given in the gospels.

A lot of this book is sentimental, idealistic tripe; it is probably one of the most dangerous books to have come off the press in recent years.

Neil Baker

## Living More Simply

Edited by Ronald J. Sider  
Hodder and Stoughton,  
Price \$4.95

(This is a practical sequel to Sider's *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger*.)

We are challenged to realise that a self-centred life, of a family or congregation, is sinful. We should be "proclaiming by our deeds and words" the good news of liberation in Christ from the "unfulfilling, self-centred, materialistic idolatry of our age." Chapters of this book by different writers tell of their attempts to live more simply. Both the Old and the New Testament proclaim that the heart closed in the face of need, shows up a life in which God is really ignored, and Christ is not truly acknowledged as our Lord.

Actual ways of simple living experienced in the life-style of a family, in church finances, and in professional life, are described. The relevance of our way of life to evangelism and the socio-political order is made plain.

As Ronald Sider puts bluntly — "Because two and a half million people have never heard the Gospel and because one billion people are starving or malnourished... Western Christians today must drastically simplify our lifestyle."

We come to feel the "heartache of our world."

Brian Dooley

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